# PRESIDENT PUTIN THANKS RABBI LAZAR FOR CHABAD'S WORK

NEWS כ"ג שבט ה'תשפ"ה - FEBRUARY 21, 2025

**At a meeting with Chief Rabbi of Russia, Rabbi Berel Lazar, and President of the Federation of Jewish Communities, Reb Alexander Boroda, President Vladimir Putin thanked them for their work for Russian society and promised to continue working together for the common good.**

The Russian government's press office published this evening the meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Chief Rabbi of Russia, Rabbi Berel Lazar.

The meeting, which took place at the President's office in the Kremlin in the center of Moscow, covered several current topics, with the participation of Reb Alexander Boroda, President of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Russia.

The meeting began with joy over the release of Sasha Troufanov from captivity in Gaza, and the rabbi thanked him for his efforts throughout the entire process, also delivering greetings from Sasha and his family, whom he had met four days ago.

The rabbi continued by mentioning the Talmudic saying, "Whoever saves a life is as if they saved an entire world."

"I remember the first meeting with you when you were serving as Prime Minister, and when you arrived for the opening of the Jewish center, that was the moment when everything began to change. Unfortunately, in the early years after Perestroika, things were not easy for the Jewish community here. We felt antisemitism, there was chaos here, poverty—not only material but also spiritual. People were lost and completely confused. Without a doubt, the way you demonstrated the importance of eternal values, and supporting traditional values, all of these gave new momentum to the community.

"Today, thank G-d, the Jewish community in Russia is developing in an amazing way, with new buildings and new programs for youngsters. In contrast to the situation of antisemitism in Europe and all the liberalism, this is only because they don't have values. And I think people look at you today and understand that you were right. There are already

leaders who have the courage to say that these values, family values, are very important and cannot be without them."

Putin responded: "I want to thank you for your active participation in the civil society of our country and for the contribution you make through the Jewish Museum. It seems to me that it has turned out to be a very good institution, one that interests not only members of the Jewish community but also our citizens from all religions and ethnic groups. The work is meaningful and comprehensive. And from a cultural perspective, it is also interesting."

Rabbi Berel Lazar: "It's interesting to see when children come to visit. For them, it's a new understanding of how to be friends, how we are all together, only together. Russia has united around spirituality, around G-d. This is a special time. We see how people come, people want, and for us, it's simply a miracle to see this here, where in the past, unfortunately, the state didn't understand how important this is. Very often I tell people not to forget how it was 25 years ago. People always want more. We also want to never be satisfied. We want to build more, do more. We want every city to have centers like these. If there is a museum, a community center, a cultural center, this is very important. It's not only for Jews, it's for everyone. Our doors are open to anyone. And by doing so, we can make a real difference in people's lives."

At the end of the meeting, President Putin thanked the rabbi for his words and promised to continue working together for the common good.

*Photos: The Kremlin*

VIDEO